

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 20-33 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to the operational flow diagram of Figure 11 in conjunction with the perspective view of Figure 7, following an unbuckle operation by the tape drive in step 400 the takeup leader and tape cartridge leader may properly disconnect in step 402. The connection status of the takeup leader and tape cartridge leader is determined by the position of the takeup leader. To test the connection status, the test fixture 120 130 extends retractable arm 323 in step 404 moving elongated rod 318 in front of positioning lever 110 in the direction of the tape cartridge. If elongated rod 318 encounters takeup leader 106 resting in close proximity to positioning lever 110 in step 406, retention of elongated rod 318 in enclosed area 150 causes drum 310 and coupled elongated rod 318 to rotate in step 408. Rotational movement of elongated rod 318 in step 408 opens the light path between light emitting source 314 and light detector 316 in step 410. In response to detecting light, the light detector 116 send a signal to the microprocessor in step 412 indicating that the takeup leader 106 and the tape cartridge leader 104 properly disconnected in step 402.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 27 and ending on page 10, line 4 with the following amended paragraph:

The present tape drive connection sensing assembly also provides a method for testing the disconnection operation of the tape drive in a laboratory environment. The sensing assembly may be is connected by a connection means 121, such as a clamp or other fixture types, to a test fixture 120 130 and positioned above a tape drive 100 for testing repeated unbuckle operations. In the testing configuration, a controller circuit may initiate an unbuckle operation of the tape drive. Following the unbuckle operation, the position of the takeup leader is detected by the test fixture 120 130 sensing assembly. In response to the position of the takeup leader, the sensing device may

provide feedback to the controller indicating the position of the takeup leader. Recording the number of unbuckle operation attempts and the number of attempts that successfully disconnect the takeup leader from the tape cartridge leader provides a method for collecting reliability data.